

NESDIS SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

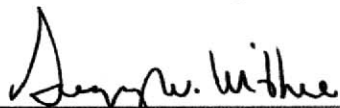
All employees are reminded that the National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS) has an on-going commitment to prevent and eliminate all forms of harassment, including harassment based on sex (with or without sexual conduct), race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, and retaliation for protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the statutory complaint process). Harassment undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, debilitates morale, and interferes with work performance and accomplishment. Harassment in any form by anyone in the workplace – supervisors, co-workers, or non-employees – will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment encompasses any act that, in exchange for sexual favors, offers to influence, interferes with or threatens the career, pay, or job of another person, male or female. Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including gestures, verbal comments or physical contacts, that interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for employees also could be considered sexual harassment.

Employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed by supervisors, co-workers, contractors, or visitors should immediately make it clear to the harasser that such behavior is offensive and ask them to stop. Employees should also promptly report the matter to the appropriate management official (i.e. the first-line supervisor, a higher level official, a NOAA Human Resource Official or the EEO Program Manager). An EEO complaint can also be initiated by contacting the NOAA Civil Rights Office within 45 days of the alleged incident.

Managers and supervisors are accountable for enforcing standards of appropriate office behavior and must take a strong stand against harassing behavior by expressing strong disapproval of any act of harassment. Supervisors must take every allegation of harassment seriously and act immediately to address the matter and take corrective action when warranted. If, under DAO 202-995, Allegations of Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, an inquiry is conducted, the victim and the participants in the inquiry are protected against retaliation and their confidentiality will be protected to the extent possible. Substantiated complaints of harassment will result in corrective action up to and including removal of the harasser from Federal service.

Throughout the years, many of you have been dedicated to helping eliminate harassment from the workplace, and I encourage you to continue your efforts. We must continue to create a workplace where all employees feel valued and respected, and carry out our responsibility for maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity. I expect all managers, supervisors, and employees to share this responsibility with me and treat harassment as a serious issue and cooperate in eliminating it.



Gregory W. Withee

Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services

5 November 2003

Date